

Brentsville Neighbors

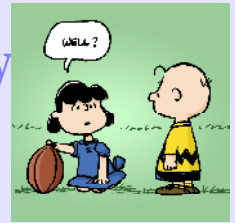


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Preserving Brentsville's History

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Welcome Neighbors,

To all of you who attended the bluegrass event at the courthouse—thank you! For those who could not make it—you missed one heck of a show. Each of the three bands was sensational and the addition of antique vehicles and the quilt demonstration all combined to make it an even more special day. But don't take my word for it, just ask any of the 500 people who attended. Yes, it was quite a success and we are looking forward to next year already.



On page three you will find information about the next phase of the final restoration of our one room

school. A Furnishing Plan is being prepared that will describe how the school will be furnished and used. It is our hope that when former students walk into the building they will look around and find it exactly as it was when they attended school there. The hardest part is finding authentic furnishings but so far there are two desks and now a globe and more books have been donated by Janie and Jerry MacDonald. We hope to receive enough donations to complete the project with a great deal of authenticity.



As for the jail, some good news. No, the windows will not be changed but restoration is moving forward and based on preliminary indications, it will be a major attraction. But more on that next month.

Very best wishes,
Kay and Morgan

This month we are remembering one of our finest citizens—Verona (Counts) (Bean) Craig who was born in Cleveland, VA on October 27, 1905, and lived most of her life on Lucasville Road just outside Brentsville. During her 103 years, 8 months and 4 days she was responsible for



many lasting memories. Her daughters, Dorothy and Ruth are sharing some of them with us in this issue.

This month:

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There is one thing that we wish to make quite clear at the outset, and this is that we are NOT superstitious. We have said it before, not defiantly, mind you, but merely with the proper emphasis, and loudly enough so that anybody who might be listening would hear. Of course we are willing to admit that things DO happen which are difficult to explain; strange things, that cannot be dealt with logically, but must be shrugged off as coincidence, and the queer occurrence in the old Nicol graveyard seems to fall into that category.

Judge Aylett Nicol, according to the marble slab under the Larch tree, departed this life, greatly mourned, in the year 1878. His mortal remains are interred in the little family burying plot that occupies a rise of ground to the east of our barn, enclosed by a rusted wire fence and fields of waving broom-sedge. The stone that marks his last resting place stands at a point midway between the graves of his two wives. As with any deserted country graveyard, weird stories cluster about it, propagated chiefly by small boys, who give it a wide berth after sunset, particularly in the late Fall and Winter, when dusk comes early, and the great, gaunt larch tree with its bare branches stiffly extended seems to mount guard over that isolated spot, where the bats swoop low out of the shadows, and you can hear the lonely cry of the whippoorwill ...

We passed that way during the afternoon of a late October day, and noted that all was in order. The next night was All-hallows eve, which according to ancient belief was the one night of the year when the forces of malice were released, and departed spirits might return to walk the earth. It is doubtful that anyone went near the out-of-the-way graveyard that night; mischief-making boys confined their humor to soaping car windows, over-turning outhouses, and such. But let us digress for a minute ...

We never had the pleasure of knowing Judge Nicol, or either of the good ladies who smoothed his path through this world. All we have to go by are our own feelings, and we suspect that if, after our exit from this life, our place were to be taken by someone (much younger) who undoubtedly rearranged the furniture and transplanted the roses, we might, at times, feel a tinge of healthy annoyance, despite our celestial detachment. On the other hand, consider the second Mrs. Nicol. Did moments never arise when the oven was too hot and someone remarked that "Mary's biscuits were never burned on the bottom?" The Chinese written word for "war," they say, symbolizes two women under one roof, and even though that roof

was, ultimately, the sheltering branch of a Larch tree ... well, ... Do you suppose it was wide enough?

We make no attempt to explain what happened, but only set down the facts as we saw them. We were in bed at midnight on Halloween, and it seemed to us that an outbreak of howling from neighborhood hound dogs was more protracted than usual, but this we attributed to the full moon, and it was not until the following morning we learned that anything was amiss. Taking a short cut down through the fields, we noticed that one of the gravestones had toppled. Investigation disclosed that it was not only down, but lay at a distance of several yards from its original position. It could hardly have fallen that far, yet who would have moved it? We attempted to put it back, but the slab of marble resisted stolidly, and it took, later, the combined efforts of three men to get the second, (or younger) Mrs. Nicol's headstone in place on its pedestal.

We tell the tale for what it is worth, only adding that, as we said in the beginning, we are NOT superstitious. There is probably some quite simple explanation ... don't you think?

...

On Saturday afternoon, October 23rd, Miss Nancy Golladay, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Golladay, of Brentsville, became the bride of Mr. Edward F. Huddle, of Elkton, Va. The wedding took place at the home of Mrs. Edward Echols, near Catlett, with few outside of the immediate family present. Miss Beth Frees was the maid of honor, and Mr. Dennis Irvin best man. The bride wore a green suit with brown accessories, and a corsage of white roses. After the ceremony, the young couple left for North Carolina where they will spend their honeymoon. They expect to make their home in Washington upon their return.

The engagement has been announced of Miss Virginia Keys, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Keys, to George Braden, Jr., Seaman Second Class, who is stationed at Norfolk. Mr. Braden spent last week-end in Brentsville as a guest of the Keys.

We hear that the dance at the Court house last Thursday night netted more than \$50. for the Baseball Team; another dance is planned for sometime next month.

Miss Fay Golladay is expected home from New York, where she has spent the past several months, on Saturday, the 30th.

Mrs. Rosie Bean and her sons, Jesse, Everett, and Bennett, and Mrs. Silas Bean and daughter, spent last week-end in Richmond, visiting Mrs. Bean's sister.

Mr. and Mrs. John Cox entertained at dinner on Sunday. Among those present were Mr. and Mrs. W.

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Brentsville School House – The Next Chapter

Last fall saw the successful completion of the restoration of the interior of the school house to its original design. In coordination with the Prince William Historic Preservation Division and the Prince William Historic Preservation Foundation, the next phase of this project – the furnishing of the school room – has started.

During the next few months, we will be scouting antique dealers and other sources for items including: school desks of the design used at the Brentsville School in the 1930's, a teacher's desk, wood stove, books, and other educational aids. The selection will be based on photographic evidence and input from past students.



Desired School Desk

This effort will be done primarily through private contributions. A generous contribution has already been pledged by the Potomac Chapter of the Questers Organization along with some in-kind donations.

Additional contributions are being sought to complete this effort. If you are interested in making a monetary contribution, you may do so through the Prince William Historic Preservation Foundation, 17674 Main Street, Dumfries, Virginia 22026. Please indicate, when making your contribution, that it is intended for the furnishing of the Brentsville School House. In most cases, your contribution will be tax deductible. Please check with your tax advisor.

The furnishing of the school house will allow the staff at the Brentsville Courthouse Historic Center to more accurately interpret the room as it was originally used for the many visitors to Brentsville every year.



Desired Teacher's Desk

My Mother, Verona

by

Dorothy (Bean) Furrow

As fall approaches I cannot think of a wiser, more interesting and inspiring person than my mother, Verona Bean Craig, whose birthday would be October 27. Only when I became older, as many young people, did I realize the honor was mine claiming her as my very own example of the greatest 'Lady' I'd ever know. She was diligent in being a counselor, bookkeeper, teacher, seamstress, cook, gardener, farmer, banker, baby-sitter, daughter-in-law, friend, mother-in-law, grandmother, great grandmother and great- great grandmother and all of these she did daily in raising my sister and me. Her greatest role though was just being a mother.

I recall the times when she would make the list of the bills she owed on the back of an envelope and beside each creditor the amount she needed to pay. Her only income would be from the sale of a calf or pig, hay, garden produce, berries we picked or selling milk and eggs. Sometimes she even took in laundry for others, having to heat the water on the wood stove as we didn't have hot water. As the pastures grew with cedar trees a couple of years during November and December there was a man that offered to buy them for Christmas. She only asked that he cut close to the ground and trusted him with the count he gave her with the pay being one dollar each. Yet it seemed as though Mother always had enough money to go around. I think everyone in Manassas knew and trusted her to give her credit at the few stores she needed; Gregory's Dress Shop, Peterson's Jewelry, Cocke's Drugstore and the Young Men's Shop.

Mother taught us many things in everyday living such as how to make a fire in the kitchen wood stove and what to do should our clothing catch on fire, the importance of being honest and that hard work will not hurt you. We weeded the garden along beside her and picked the vegetables, eating a few warm ripe tomatoes along the way. Without knowing we were being taught we learned a lot about home economics

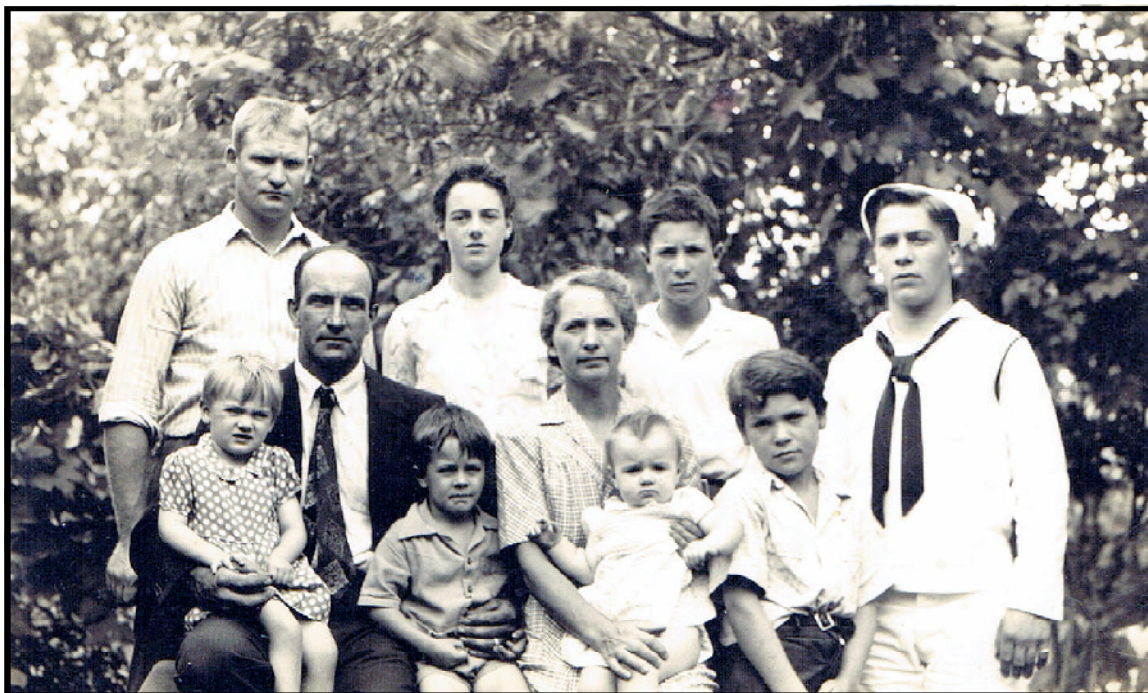
every day as she showed us how to embroider, sew on a button and iron clothes. I can see her now standing at the table mixing the biscuit dough and rolling it out on her wooden bread board; today I still use that board and one handle rolling pin. I don't recall Mother ever measuring those ingredients so today I don't either.

She taught Delores, who was married to my cousin, Howard Counts, how to crochet. This was not an easy task as Delores is left handed. Mother finally realized that if Delores sat in front of her she would learn much more easily and did she ever! Delores took off and may even today still be crocheting.

When my two older brothers got married Mother was always available to baby-sit. There were times when one or the other of those two families were also living with us; lessons in child-care were available to us daily as we would be there to help with the children when Mother would care for them. We had chores to do and in the winter that included splitting wood and keeping the wood box filled. In the fall we'd start carrying in wood and stacking it on the back porch.

Mother worked so very hard providing for Ruthie and me. Back then it seemed we never had much of anything but today I know we were so rich, rich in Mother's love and guidance. She went to work for one day in the Osbourn High School cafeteria and was there for twenty years. Unfortunately there wasn't a retirement program available at that time for the school workers, therefore, Mother was not able to draw a retirement check, only her social security.

Even so, I am glad Mother was able to enjoy her 'retirement' at leisure and no longer had to toil so just to survive. I am also grateful for all the lessons I learned from her. I miss her so very much and not a day goes by that I don't think of her and recall at least one of her precious memories. Mother was born in 1905 and she would have had a birthday this October 27.



The family of Jesse Clyde Bean: Standing (L-R) K. M. "Red" Hartman, Lucy (Bean) Hartman, James A. Bean, and Charles A. Bean. Sitting (L-R) Dorothy Lee Bean, Jesse Clyde Bean, Robert Horace Bean, Verona (Counts) Bean holding Ruth Bean, and Roy Freeman Bean. Summer 1944.



The 1st and 5th generation
May 5, 2007
Verona, age 101 years, 6 months, 9 days
holding
Jaylah Sky Williams, age 2 days.

Photos courtesy of Ruth Dotson



Verona with her youngest son, Robert Horace Bean,
January 7, 1997

PRECIOUS MOTHER, PROTECTOR AND PROVIDER--VERONA

by
Ruth (Bean) Dotson

Mama had to work hard most of her life. She used to tell us about how she and her sister would have to go cut firewood in the summer for the fall and winter. Her father was a little hard of hearing and crippled. When they made a garden he would make a hole with his cane and she and her sister had to put the seeds in and cover them.

When she and Papa got a divorce she didn't get much support. We lived on a farm so we had chickens, turkeys, sheep, pigs, and cows, which she had to take care of. We usually had chicken for Sunday dinner, always had eggs for breakfast, usually had ham, bacon or sausage to go with them. She would sell the turkeys for Thanksgiving, sold the wool after having the sheep sheared, and sold some of the pigs. She would pick blackberries to sell. At Christmas time she would make fruit cakes. Some she sold and we had the rest. Someone once said, "Your mom isn't much of a cook, but she sure makes good fruitcakes". She would put a little wine on them after they were baked and let them set for a few weeks before cutting them. When I was in the Army overseas, she made one to send to me. She put the wine on it after making it, told everyone that it was for me and to not eat that one. A few of my brothers and I think even my sister came along not realizing that she had already put the wine on and added more. When I opened that cake up everyone in the barracks could smell it. I was very popular for a while.

She started working at Osbourn High School when I was in the 5th grade. It was supposed to be for a week while someone was out sick but she worked from 1953 until the 1970's. Sometimes if she didn't have a ride home she would ride home on the school bus with us. At that time the schools cooked the food in the kitchen and it was very good most of the time. And back then the cooks got to bring home the leftover food. We weren't supposed to tell anyone so when she rode the bus home and had food she would say that the food was garbage for the pigs. So I grew up telling everyone, if they asked what I had for dinner, "garbage". That food fed a lot of my family.

When we were little we walked most everywhere we went. Mama would have a flashlight and Dorothy would be on one side and I would be on the other. One night we were walking home and we heard footsteps coming up pretty fast behind us. I held on tight and so did Dorothy, Mama couldn't have done anything if she had needed to. The footsteps got louder and faster. Finally a large dog, must have been a Great Dane or something, ran past us. We all burst out laughing. Mama was always very brave, or she acted like she was. But one night I had gone to Youth meeting at church and when I got home she wasn't in the house, but all the lights were on. I looked everywhere for her, even checked the barn. So I went back in the house, got my pj's and left a note saying I had gone up to Sister's since she wasn't home. I walked up the road and there she was! She said she heard a noise in the pantry and got scared and left because she could not open the door to see what it was. I told her that there was nothing there now, because I checked and everywhere else for her too. Needless to say we spent the night at Sister's.

In 1970, the taxes got so high on the farm that we decided it was time to divide it up before the time that had originally been decided – when she passed away. After that life was a lot easier for her. We all agreed that she would always have a place to live with any one of her children and never be put in a nursing home. Most of the time she stayed with Dorothy, but when she came to Manassas she usually stayed with me. She was always packed. If you said Mama, do you want to go – before you could say where she would say "I'm packed." She went to Hawaii to help my daughter Melody with her young daughter one summer. She went on several cruises with Dorothy and her husband. James used to take us to Florida some. She definitely loved to travel. She had always wanted to go to Japan and Alaska. She got to go to Alaska when she was 100. When you are a hundred the crew let you do a lot of things that regular people don't get to do.

When WAR Came to Brentsville

DIVISION HEADQUARTERS,
Fort Lyon, October 18, 1861.

Advance from Lewinsville, Falls Church, Little River turnpike, and on the left towards Elzey's and Occoquan, when the enemy will fall back beyond Bull Run, if he has not already done so.

The force on the left would by this movement reach the Occoquan and be in position to co-operate with another force to be landed between Occoquan and Dumfries. This force would advance and take possession of the railroad in front of Brentsville or at Bristoe.

To prevent the large force said to be at Aquia Creek from interrupting this movement, have some of the larger men-of-war and transports, with some troops, to ascend the Potomac, attack the batteries, and threaten to land troops to attack them in the rear, thus preventing any force from being detached towards Dumfries.

The smaller vessels and gunboats and transports could ascend the Potomac to cover the crossing between Occoquan and Dumfries. A portion or all the troops preparing for the expedition at Annapolis can be brought here, as well as a portion of those above on the Potomac. This would only delay this secret expedition a few days.

As the transports could not carry a sufficient force at one time, a portion can march down on the Maryland side.

S.P. HEINTZELMAN,
Brigadier-General.

Samuel Peter Heintzelman (September 30, 1805 – May 1, 1880) was a United States Army General. He served in the Seminole War, the Mexican-American War, the Yuma War and the Cortina Troubles. Heintzelman was born in Manheim, Pennsylvania. He graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1826.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Heintzelman became the colonel of the 17th Pennsylvania Infantry, and was soon promoted to command of a division in the Army of Northeastern Virginia. He was wounded at the July 1861 battle of Bull Run, but soon recovered and resumed his duties.

Heintzelman was in overall command of the 2nd Michigan Infantry regiment that was responsible for

the raid, ransacking, and devastation of the Pohick Church in Lorton, Virginia, on November 12, 1861.

The historic church was built in 1769 by George Washington, George Mason, and George William Fairfax, among others, and restored after the War of 1812 by President Martin Van Buren, John Quincy Adams, and Francis Scott Key, among others. This ransacking caused the loss of a myriad of irreplaceable artifacts.



He commanded the III Corps of the Army of the Potomac in the Peninsula Campaign. His corps played a prominent role in the siege of Yorktown where Heintzelman and division commander Fitz John Porter were among the first to use the Union Army Balloon Corps. The corps bore

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Poppers and Other Toys

By Morgan Breeden

While pulling out of our driveway a few days ago, my wife commented, “Look at all of those poppers!” And yes, the yard was full of them. When I took time to reflect on this statement it dawned on me that in all likelihood, not a single person under the age of 50 would have any idea what she was talking about. Why? Because there are so many high-tech toys to occupy their time they would never have had the opportunity to enjoy many of the pastimes things of our own youth.

The pleasures of that time were simple and I’d like to think they were also innocent. What country boy didn’t have a home-made slingshot stuck in his back pants pocket? In all likelihood he was taught how to make it by his father, an uncle or an older brother. All it took was a forked stick, an old rubber inner tube and perhaps the tongue from a discarded shoe. Add a few smooth pebbles and BINGO! Hour upon hour of good clean fun learning how to hit a target.

We also made a bow and arrows. Not that it worked very well. Maybe it didn’t work at all but the fun was in the making and *pretending* that it worked. In our make-believe world we would sneak up on that big bear and with a single shot from our trusty bow provide meat for the covered wagon train that lasted a week!

My uncle also taught me how to make a whistle from a dogwood branch. First you would find a limb about the size of your thumb and cut it off to about four inches long. Then with the back of your pocket knife (oh yes, we all had a pocket knife that was never absent from our pocket) you would rub the limb over and over (but not too hard) until the bark slid off the stick in a single unbroken piece. The skinned piece is cut to form the whistle body and then bark then slid back in

place. I’ve left out a few steps here but with some practice a very nice whistle would result.

Now I’m not suggesting that all of our toys were home made. I remember one year for Christmas I got a Hopalong Cassidy outfit – complete with “silver” six-shooters! I must have worn this outfit to school a dozen times to be admired by my classmates and teachers alike. It’s hard to imagine what would happen today if a youngster wore an outfit like that to school. He’d probably be expelled for life! Remember in January of 2003 when a 6-year-old boy was suspended from his Maryland elementary school for making a gun gesture with his finger, pointing it at a classmate and saying “pow.” How crazy was that? When did we decide it was bad for a kid to act like a kid? Play cowboys and Indians at school now and ... well... I believe it’s crazy!

But back to the “Poppers.” Take a narrow leaf plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) head and fold it as shown in the photo, by pulling the loop, the head will “pop” off and “shoot” out for a distance of two or three feet. As kids in the country we often had pretend “battles” with these. Oh wait – I’d better get the mower going fast – I might be reported for growing weapons of mass destruction!!



(Continued from page 2)

Hill Brown, Mrs. T. E. Didlake, Miss Nancy Lee Didlake, Mr. Alan Fletcher, and Mr. David McKillip.

Mr. Johnny Counts is recovering from a back injury, suffered in an accident at Longview Park.

Mrs. Harvey Hensley celebrated her fifty-first anniversary at her home. Present were Mrs. Verona Bean, Mrs. Troy Counts, and Mrs. Ep Woodyard.

Mrs. Ethel Johnson, of Butler, Ohio, has been visiting her aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Bradford.

Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Whetzel were Mrs. Whetzel's cousins, Mrs. Albert Haller, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Giles and son, Jay, from Hagerstown, Md. Mr. and Mrs. Everett Speakes were also out from Washington for the day.

Ordinarily there are no services held at the Presbyterian Church on the 5th Sunday, but next Sunday, the 31st, a sermon will be preached by Mr. Maynard Fountain, of Richmond, at 10 A.M.

Best Regards,

Agnes Webster

Source: The Manassas Messenger, October 29, 1948

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the brunt of the fighting at Williamsburg and saw significant action at Fair Oaks and Oak Grove. His corps was temporarily attached to the Army of Virginia and took part in the Second Battle of Bull Run. He was commissioned as a brevet brigadier general in the regular army for the battle of Fair Oaks and a major general of volunteers for the battle of Williamsburg. His popularity and confidence in the army were eclipsed by the aggressive nature of his subordinate division commanders Joseph Hooker and Philip Kearny. Relieved of duty with the Army of the Potomac in late 1862, he was assigned to the defense of Washington, D.C. in command of the Department of Washington. For the remainder of the war he commanded the Northern Department.

Heintzelman retired in 1869 as a major general in the regulars. He died in Washington, D.C., and is buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo.

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

F e e d b a c k

I am writing to thank you for the article in your March 2012 issue of Brentsville Neighbors about Rev. George Watkins Crabtree and his founding of the Jehoash Presbyterian Church in Catlett.

Rev. Crabtree was my grandfather, though I never knew him. My mother, Susan, was 2 years old when he passed away in 1940, so even she barely has any memory of her father. We occasionally attended services at Jehoash as I was growing up, but have not been in a few years, as our family moved to southern Virginia and were only able to attend the occasional Homecomings.

A couple of years ago, I began to search in earnest for more details on our family history, particularly on my mother's side given her lack of knowledge about it. In addition to finding out a great deal about Grandpa Crabtree's work as a prison reformer, I traced his ancestry back several generations, and with the assistance of a distant cousin, back to our immigrant Crabtree ancestor from England in 1616. Following that, I proceeded to then research back to the present. As you may have heard in speaking with Jehoash congregants, Grandpa had a sister from whom he was separated following their mother's passing. She remained in North Carolina and went on to have several children and many grand- and great-grandchildren. I have spoken with a few.

At the end of your article, you note that "the author of this Presbytery history is engaged in an independent study project about Mr. Crabtree, hoping to document his largely-unknown work in some journal or booklet." I would be happy to assist by providing additional information about Rev. Crabtree's history prior to his conversion and ministry. I have collected a large number of newspaper articles from the early 1900s about him which I am happy to share.

All the best,

Tony Fleming

Laurel, MD

Brentsville Neighbors

Preserving Brentsville's History

Contact us on:

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All back issues on:

<http://www.historicprincewilliam.org/brentsvilleneighbors/index.html>

IN GOD WE TRUST

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